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15 June 1989

MEMORANDUM FOR:

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Legislative Division  
Office of Congressional Affairs

FROM: R. W. Manners  
Director, Foreign Broadcast Information Service

SUBJECT: H. R. 2188 - Request for Comments

REF: Yr memo, dtd 6 Jun 89, same subject (OCA-1812-89)

1. Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on H. R. 2188, "Foreign Language Competence for the Future Act of 1989."

2. As you know, much of the work FBIS performs for the Agency and the Intelligence Community depends upon persons who are skilled in the use of most major foreign languages. Skilled linguists are hard to find, attract, and retain. We therefore generally welcome initiatives that will promote foreign language instruction or enlarge the pool of prospective job applicants.

3. H. R. 2188, focused as it is on the development of foreign language school teachers at the secondary level, does not promise to be of particular help in our situation. From our standpoint, the Agency's approach to the Office of Management and Budget on the matter of foreign language competence may be delayed until an initiative more responsive to Agency/FBIS needs is ready for discussion.

4. We have some ideas on how a program to identify and train serious language students for careers in the national security establishment might work. If there is ever a legislative proposal to which they might be attached, we would be glad to offer them for consideration.

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R. W. Manners